



Beacon Church Connect Groups Application: week commencing 16 July 2017

Grateful Family on a Mission

On Sunday we looked at what it means to be part of the family of God. We looked in particular at Mark 3,21-35 and John 6, 24-29. We noted how in Mark 3,35 Jesus says "Whoever does God's will is my brother and sister and mother." Doing the Father's will, and so joining the family, involved believing in Jesus (John 6,29: All of him!). We looked at 3 things that can hinder us from joining the family of God in the first place and/or enjoying the full benefits of belonging. These were:

- Not believing anything he says and does because he is out of his mind and his message and actions do not make sense. Mark 3, 21 makes clear that is what his natural family felt. (The fact that they waited outside the house for him has some symbolism for their position with regard to his true family seated around him).
- Only join for what they can get (see John 6,26) and fail to see beyond the provision (e.g. foodbank, healing) to the one who is worthy of worship no matter what our circumstances.
- Those who think they have to work to earn entry into the family (see John 6, 28-29)

We saw how there are at least 4 areas where we can work at being the sort of family that reflects the character of the Father and the Son (and the Holy Spirit). These include sharing a common:

- Experience of grace and forgiveness (Jesus is my saviour)
- Interest in knowing Jesus better and making him known (Jesus' is present with me)
- Love for and Obedience to Jesus (Jesus is my Lord)
- Goal to glorify Jesus and make him known to others (Jesus is glorified)

We were encouraged to move forward as a Grateful Family on a Mission.

Suggested questions – be selective

John 6,35-40 records some amazing words of Jesus. Share with each other what other actions or words stand out for you.

Share words or actions that are encouraging. What is encouraging about them?

Share words or actions that are challenging! What is challenging about them? How so you respond?

CS Lewis says in his book "Mere Christianity": "A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic — on the level with the man who says he is a poached egg — or else he would be the Devil of Hell." What do you think?

While people today may not use the term "out of his mind" what might they say about Jesus that similarly hinders their capacity to believe in him?

Share how we can encourage people we engage with through Foodbank ministries, healing, parenting and children's ministries, etc. to see beyond the provision to the Kings of Kings who loved them.

Share ways that you might in practice encourage each other to develop and grow in the 4 common areas identified that build the local and worldwide church up as a family.

John Stott says: "The divine family ceases to be a credible concept if it is not itself sub-divided into human families which display God's love." Think of ways that your natural families might better reflect the heavenly family.

Pray as a group to be the best heavenly family you can be.

Pray for our natural families that they reflect this model (be aware if this is a sensitive issue for some).

Enjoy your time being a family!

Keith